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ABSTRACT

Beginning in November 1986 and continuing through the end of March 1987, the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA), consisting of 36 teachers and administrators from 23 school districts in the Capital Area (Albany, New York) met in a series of six full-day sessions to deliberate on issues being raised in the current national policy debate on educational reform. This report summarizes these discussions in four essays. The keynote essay, "A School for Learning," suggests that in order for schools to rededicate themselves to learning, schools must use what is known about learning; student evaluation practices should be designed to assist learning rather than simply to screen students; scheduling should be guided by learning requirements, and not vice versa; learning should be aimed toward creating contributing members of a humane and caring society; and a shared vision in school and community is needed to transform schools into centers of learning. The second essay, "A New Model for School Leadership," calls for redefining the roles of teacher and administrator to promote greater teamwork and collegiality. A model is provided for a concentric team approach to school organization and leadership, focusing on the student. The third essay, "The Professionalizing of Teaching", calls for changes in the way contracts are negotiated and what is included in them and changes in the roles of teachers and administrators. It also calls for greater teacher participation in curricular decisions, and for norms of continuous self-improvement among teachers. The final essay, "Preparing for the Future in the Teaching Profession," sets forth specific recommendations for improving teacher education programs. (TE)

ED289249

A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE: A LOOK AT THE NATIONAL REPORTS

Report of the
Select Seminar on
Excellence in Education

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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The Capital Area School Development Association
School of Education, The University at Albany
State University of New York

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A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE: A LOOK AT THE NATIONAL REPORTS

Report of the Select Seminar on Excellence in Education

September 1987

Sponsored by:
The Capital Area School Development Association
School of Education, The University at Albany
State University of New York

Funding for this Seminar was
Provided by the Golub Corporation

Preface

Beginning in November, 1986 and continuing through the end of March, 1987, thirty-six teachers and administrators from twenty-three school districts in the Capital Area met in a series of six full-day sessions to deliberate and consider issues being raised in the current national policy debate on educational reform. Such issues included teacher recruitment and training, the mission and structure of schools, teacher recognition, career ladders, student achievement and evaluation, to name only a few. It is our observation that practicing teachers and administrators are given, at best, a perfunctory role in shaping educational policy at state and national levels. It is our belief and conviction that their voices must be heard—their observations and recommendations heeded—if changes encouraged by the reform movement are to be more than cosmetic.

This seminar provided an occasion for a significant group of teachers and administrators to actively participate in the reform debate. This report of the work of the seminar will be broadly distributed to federal and state policy makers, institutions of higher education, and colleagues in elementary and secondary schools. We believe its significance will rest not only on the lucid and well-reasoned discussion embodied in its content, but on the fact that it comes from those who, on a daily basis, experience the reality of schools and classrooms.

This year, in addition to the seminar, the Golub Corporation with CASDA and The School of Education, sponsored a Scholars' Recognition Program which celebrated student excellence by honoring 119 students from across the Capital District for academic performance, leadership and service to their communities. The students, in turn, nominated teachers who had a profound effect on their learning. Teachers selected from this group of nominees will be participants in next year's seminar.

The support of the Golub Corporation, and in particular Mr. Lewis Golub for this seminar and the larger enterprise it represents, is a testimony not only to their generosity, but to their recognition of our mutual interdependence.

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We extend our appreciation to Richard Lewis, George Leibowitz, Judith Goodman, and William Schwartz for their writing and editorial assistance.

Introduction

Is it possible to bring about real change in our public schools, particularly the dramatic kinds of change the spate of recent national reports on education conclude are needed—and soon? If so, those currently working in those schools, and those soon to begin working there, will have to behave differently. Oddly, one thing the national reports have in common is the absence of involvement of working school people in their preparation.

As one response to this lack, the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA), as it has on other topics over the past several years, conducted a select seminar on Excellence in Education in which a group of teachers and administrators was invited to converse periodically over several months and to write its own report summarizing these discussions. In this case, the starting point was the group's response to three national reform reports: *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*, The Report of the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy; *Time for Results*, the Governor's 1991 Report on Education; and *Tomorrow's Teachers*, A Report of the Holmes Group.

The report that follows consists of four essays which we believe share much of the content and (we hope) some of the spirit of the seminar. Because the discussions followed the instincts and experience of seminar members, the essays should not be seen as final conclusions but as the extension and expansion of this conversation to a larger audience.

In the first essay, representing the work of the seminar group focusing on instruction, there is the strong suggestion that our schools are not as dedicated to learning as they might be: "To achieve the goal of schools as true centers of learning, significant changes must occur, not just in schools, but in the basic attitudes towards learning held by the society which schools tend to accurately reflect."

The second essay on school leadership offers a proposal for significant restructuring to make possible collaboration and shared decision making among coequals.

The professionalizing of teaching is the focus of the third essay. Changes are called for "in the classroom, the school and the community. Nevertheless, the process of becoming a professional begins and ends with the teacher."

Finally, the report concludes with a discussion of teacher preparation. Using the recommendations of the three reform reports as a starting point, this paper suggests some specific models for teacher preparation and continuing education.

The Process

The CASDA select seminars follow a very simple structure based upon a set of guiding principles:

1. ***Participants need to commit adequate time—to work, to reflect, and to write.***

Most seminars have been conducted for five full days over three months, the first three days spread about two weeks apart over the first two months with the final session being a two-day overnight retreat in the middle to the end of the third month.

2. ***A conducive working environment is very important.***

The seminars have been conducted in "protected environments"—away from the work site, in quiet and aesthetically pleasing surroundings with special care being given to the quality of food and refreshments. We believe this clearly is a first step in communicating to participants that the seminar is special and there are high expectations that the deliberations of its members will have an important result. The first three days of this seminar were conducted at the Rockefeller Institute in Albany. The final two-day retreat was held at the Rensselaerville Institute.

3. ***The seminar participants are the experts.***

We believe these select seminars have been highly successful in part because of the high degree of personal and professional respect afforded participants and the central belief on which the seminar series was founded: "that consciously competent teachers and administrators are the best arbiters of educational practice." While participants do extensive reading during the seminars, visiting experts and lecturers are not a part of this experience. The twenty-two teachers and fourteen administrators who participated in this seminar represented over 500 years of classroom experience. They themselves constituted the body of experts.

4. ***Roles are "checked at the door."***

One's ideas must stand on their own, be debated, accepted or discarded without reference to one's position, prior experience, or education. This seminar included school superintendents, principals, supervisors, and teachers.

5. ***Seminars are self-governing entities with organizers serving the group.***

The coordination of the seminar was managed by a university professor and the director and associate director of CASDA. After providing the initial structure and on-going logistical support, they worked to transfer the governance and

direction from themselves to the participants. By the end of the seminar it is fair to say that it was self-governed with the coordinators taking direction from the seminar group.

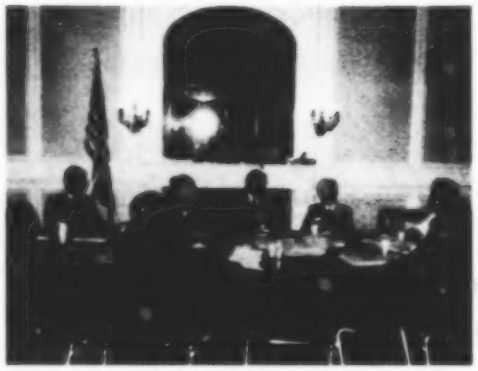
6. ***The experience is at least as important as the product.***

All seminar participants agree that the process, the experience, is most important; in fact, the report might be quite different if the process had continued over time, this representing but one point in an ongoing process when, although there was much agreement on important issues, there was strong disagreement as well. Even so, the report provides an important documentation of the experience and serves to validate for each of the participants the energy and effort they expended.

It is also hoped that this report will provide inspiration and help to those who read it and may assist in a modest way to continue what has become a very important national conversation on teaching and schools. We firmly believe such an ongoing conversation can only result in better education for all of our children. ■

A School for Learning

Suppose there were a school somewhere absolutely devoted to learning, where it was understood that learning was the primary purpose and the development of the individual the most important consideration. Such a school would look and function very differently from today's typical schools which, reacting to the many purposes expected of them, too often prevent learning and discourage individual development. Such a school would be the product of a shared vision of all participants, in which all pedagogy derived from a solid knowledge base, where evaluation actually assessed and reinforced learning, where learning needs dictated the use of time, space, and instructional activity. In such a school, parents and other community members would be found involved in support of learning. Those who left such a school would take their place as contributing members of a humane and caring society.



Such a school is achievable today; in fact, many elements are now present in many schools. However, to achieve the goal of schools as true centers of learning, significant changes must occur, not just in schools, but in the basic attitudes toward learning held by the society which schools tend to accurately reflect.

The Purpose of Education: Learning

The purposes of formal education—schooling—are often unclear and opposed to each other. Some critics argue, in fact, that the purpose often seems to be to sort and rank students as a way of maintaining the social hierarchy. Suppose, though, that all could agree that the primary purpose was to learn, that each individual's development was of paramount importance.

In order for this agreement to come about, all (the community, school district, individual schools, departments, teachers, students, and their parents) must first engage in processes to develop and share a common vision of purpose. Out of this would evolve agreement about what ends students would aspire to, what they should know and be able to do, what attitudes they would bring to learning and living. This could not be seen as somebody else's job (a state education department's or school board's). Underlying this commitment to a commonly held vision would be the recognition that learning occurs within a learner's mind and is not limited to a school environment. The system of rewards, incentives, and honors for students and staff would reflect and reinforce the value placed upon learning in the total community.

Teachers in such a school are to be seen actively engaged in both teaching and learning. Much of the present literature on school

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reform sees improvement deriving from attracting more talented teachers. To do this, it is argued, the school environment must be more attractive, one in which more decision making is shared by the teaching professionals. Although this is certainly important, teachers concerned primarily with learning recognize that *true* empowerment results not from gaining collective control or more management responsibility but in becoming, as individuals, more completely in control of their practice. Such teachers employ and continually add to their personal knowledge of content, pedagogy, and human development. Many are involved in individual or collegial research projects. Visitors to their classrooms find them spending more and more time on the teaching of processes rather than content knowledge; they themselves are models of critical inquiry, conveying through their teaching an open, critical attitude toward learning. Their focus is on the individual student, not on a class or some content, and the emphasis of their instruction on creating the best possible environment for engaging students in learning. Such teachers recognize the continuing need to update and integrate not only their professional knowledge but their knowledge of learners and the changes which continually occur in the experiences students bring to classrooms.

For their part, the students are actively engaged, both individually and collectively, in learning processes that promote learning, thinking about learning, and the belief that learning is worthwhile. They have participated in establishing their goals and are therefore committed to them. They understand that the responsibility for learning is upon the individual learner. They exult in their own development and are not concerned with how they compare to others.

Students exult in their own development and are not concerned with how they compare to others.

Using What Is Known About Learning

In a school in which learning is the paramount concern, pedagogy is based upon and utilizes sound research and theory about child and adolescent development as well as about teaching and learning. A great deal is known and agreed upon in these areas, much of which has been developed only over the past ten years or so. Even so, this knowledge is often not possessed or, if known, does not inform the practice.

Again, there is a collaboration among all participants (the community, school districts, individual schools, departments, teachers) to foster and promote sound instructional practices. The continuing development of teacher knowledge base and skills is consistently sponsored and promoted. The instructional processes themselves

are continually monitored to ensure that they are in keeping with the state of knowledge. Teachers recognize the need to add to their knowledge, learning with and from each other, developing and implementing a number of alternative learning models, and applying critical thinking skills instruction throughout the grades, across the curriculum, and at appropriate developmental levels.

The Purpose of Evaluation: to Assist Learning

Of all activities that take place in schools, probably none can do more to detract from the importance of learning than the evaluation practices, grading and the reporting of grades. The earning of a satisfactory grade, grade-point-average, or rank-in-class too often becomes *the* purpose for schooling rather than the learning the grade could reflect. In fact, the very means used to determine grades often convey disregard for the learning process. For instance, the practice of averaging together different grades blurs the highs and lows, making the message clear: neither learning something very well (the "A") nor not yet learning at all (the "F") is important since it all *becomes* "C." Where learning is what matters, on the other hand, evaluation methods are used *only* to assess and to reinforce learning.

When learning matters most, evaluation reflects individual development and progress, not as it compares to others. All students are expected to achieve to a clearly stated level for all important learning. The averaging of high and low achievement is avoided, and the means used to evaluate are the most appropriate, not the most convenient. Much more time is spent observing and keeping anecdotal records, for instance, than in using quick scoring machines. "Failure" is not used to describe the lack of willingness to undertake learning. Evaluation is never used to sort and catalog students (such as by rank-in-class or grade-point-averages) or to compare schools or school districts. This is not to say that testing or grading is eliminated; however, grade reporting is formative and made at times appropriate for individuals, not for groups (or computer availability). Various courses of study, whether vocational or college preparatory, are chosen on the basis of individual needs and interests and are equally valued, no course being "worth" more than another.

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Student learning and the instructional programs are evaluated regularly against agreed upon external criteria, and the instructional staff monitors testing actively to assess its congruence with stated goals.

In a school where learning is most important, the evaluation processes reinforce the value of learning. Schools must refuse to

The master schedule, bell schedule, lunch schedule, etc., dictate learning.

engage in evaluation practices which demean the value of learning and the learner.

Time and Space: Controlled Rather Than Controlling

In a center for learning, the actual learning needs dictate the uses of time, place, and instructional activity, rather than vice versa. Unfortunately, learning is often severely restricted, if not prevented altogether, in schools where these factors are fixed. In such environments, expedience rules! The master schedule, bell schedule, lunch schedule, etc., dictate learning. In the interests of maintaining a "smooth running operation," options for learning are closed.

When time and space are considered flexible, rather than fixed, there are no permanent structures (sizes of classrooms, numbers and types of desks) and no "magic numbers" (beginning and ending times for all, numbers of subjects studied in any one day for all, credit hours). In a school where an individual student's development is what matters most, it is recognized that different people need differing amounts of time and different groupings if they are to learn to do the same things equally well; therefore, that time is provided in the learning day, which is restructured and extended, and various teaching styles are employed. Time is provided for teacher interaction and collaborative planning, too, and, just as importantly, for individual study and reflection since it is recognized that teaching is much more than actual instruction. Paraprofessionals perform noninstructional tasks. The use of space is rethought and various environments provided to expand the traditional "egg crate" classroom and make possible tutoring (individual and peer), small group instruction, learning centers, process instruction, etc.

The decisions about how much time and what types of environments to employ must be *instructional* decisions, deriving from learning needs, not "givens," if learning is to be valued.

Learning: A Shared Responsibility

There is a tendency for schools to be thought of as places isolated from the rest of the community, involving "outsiders" only for significant events (problems, graduations, basketball championships). But the message that learning is important must be sent by more than the school. If learning is so important, a student rightfully asks, "Why isn't the adult community more involved in it?" In communities which value learning, parents and other community members *are* actively involved in schools to support and reinforce learning.

In a society which truly values learning, many members of a community (not just elected school boards) participate in goal setting, evaluating, and planning. It is common to see parents regularly involved in schools and to see adults other than parents assisting in the instructional process. In fact, regular opportunities are provided for parents to learn, to become better parents and teachers of their own children. Parents meet with teachers and administrators not only to become informed about the school's policies and procedures intended for *all* students, but to develop clear learning goals for their own students and a plan for them as parents to assume specific responsibilities to support the learner.

But parents are not the only adults in a community of learners. A school which is truly the center of learning in a community draws upon the expertise of its many members as teachers and consultants. Partnerships are formed with business, higher education, and other schools. Schools regularly sponsor or facilitate programs of distinction in education. And, behind all this, a rewards and recognition program conveys solid community support for a sound instructional program.

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Learning to Improve the World

Learning "stuff," learning to employ complex processes, learning to approach life's problems with curiosity and a critical attitude, even learning to acquire a love for learning itself—all this is not enough. Students must also learn to become contributing members of a humane and caring society. If this is to be accepted as a bona fide instructional goal, all environments within the educational community (not just classrooms) must promote interaction in human, caring ways.

In schools which promote humaneness, all participants (teachers and administrators, students and support staff) model and interact in human, caring ways. The anonymity of largeness is combatted by strategies that promote belongingness such as staff and peer advisory systems. Competitiveness is devalued, and cooperative learning experiences maximized. The use of teaming, schools-within-schools, and other structures aimed at creating more human-sized groups encourage teachers to interact on the basis of known student needs. Staff development provides teachers with continuous human relations training. Where affective and cognitive curriculums coexist, periodic social functions promote a spirit of caring, involvement, and pride in belonging.

Learning to be human does not occur automatically, nor does it happen as some sort of accidental byproduct of other learning.

Learning to be human does not occur automatically, nor does it happen as some sort of accidental byproduct of other learning. It must be valued, planned, taught, and practiced as with all other learning.

Making Our Schools into Centers for Learning

What does it take to transform a school into a center for learning? First, we must make an honest and objective assessment of what we are doing (and not doing) to determine just what values we *are* conveying, if not the value of learning. Is what's most important to get "through" or to get "out"? Is the grade, or the rank, or the college acceptance, or the job the reason for attending? What are we in our communities and in our schools doing to reinforce and promote the very values which demean learning?

Only communities of learners can expect schools for learning.

Is there no shared vision, no agreed upon purpose for our school, or is there some statement of philosophy approved by some past board of education that no one clearly remembers and that no longer truly governs what we do? Then we must come together to agree upon our purpose and commit ourselves to it. Are our teachers informed and knowledgeable about teaching, learning and human development, and does the instruction consistently reflect it? If not, that knowledge must be gained and practiced before teachers can be hopeful of external empowerment. Do our evaluation practices reinforce extrinsics and subvert learning? If so, we must insist that only evaluation strategies that assess and reinforce learning are employed. Are the fixed structures of time and space restricting or preventing learning? Then we must reconsider these operational decisions and make them dependent upon learning needs. Is the affective curriculum a distant stepcousin to the cognitive? Learning to be human will not become important unless we value its importance by devoting time and energy to it.

But, most of all, is education in our community considered somebody else's business, something we are (grudgingly) willing to pay for as long as it's not too much and its costs are limited to only financial ones, something that "they'" need periodically to improve?

Schools which foster and promote learning above all else can exist and flourish only in societies which regard learning most highly. True school reform will not come about out of fear (as with the post-Sputnik era) or out of economic desperation (as with the present concern, reflected in the Carnegie Report) over losing our place in the world market.

Only communities of learners can expect schools for learning. ■

A New Model for School Leadership

Most national reform reports conclude that fundamental changes must be made in the way decisions are reached if schools are to be viewed as attractive professional environments.

> "If schools are to compete successfully with medicine, architecture and accounting for staff, then teachers will have to have comparable authority in making the key decisions about the services they render. . . This means the ability to make—or at least strongly influence—decisions concerning such things as materials and instructional methods used, the staffing structure to be employed, the organization of the school day, the assignment of the students, the consultants to be used, and the allocation of resources available to the school." (*A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*, The Report of the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy.)

> "The existing structure of schools, the current working conditions of teachers, and the current division of authority between administrators and teachers are all seriously out of step with the requirements of the new profession. If the construction of a genuine profession of teaching is to succeed, schools will have to change." (*Tomorrow's Teachers*, A Report of the Holmes Group)

> "Effective leadership is not the sole responsibility of the principal. Leadership should result from organizing a school's staff and material resources in an open interdependent working environment that values teachers as participants in decisions." (*Time for Results*, The Governors' 1991 Report on Education).

The "turf" mentality that has hardened around various roles in education must be abandoned.

For three such disparate groups to reach such similar conclusions makes it obvious that there is the need for a new model of decision making to replace the present top-down vertical one. What needs must this model meet?

The Need to Redefine the Profession

First, the concept of "profession" needs to be broadened to include all actors in the process. Teaching is not the profession; education is! This notion—that education is a profession that draws upon the talents and expertise of many different participants—must be understood by the greater community.

The Need to Redefine the Roles of Teacher and Administrator

For too long, the teacher has been seen as one who begins with certain "givens"—so many students, a curriculum, certain classrooms and materials, a scheduled amount of time. Then, in this conception, the teacher is to "teach," that is, to instruct children.

But if teaching is to be a profession taking place in an environment where multi-talented people feel fulfilled and their morale high, teaching must be understood to be much more than this. The new model must describe new relationships among all participants and the ways in which new responsibilities will be coordinated. It must provide for teacher participation in decisions which affect the instructional processes and the overall environment in which they take place. (The "turf" mentality that has hardened around various roles in education must be abandoned.)

Furthermore, teachers must see the possibility of changing roles if they wish, aware of themselves on a rung of a career ladder rather than, as today, on a step of a salary schedule of a job that otherwise remains the same for 30 years. And the community and boards of education must understand that teaching involves much more than student-contact instructional time, valuing equally the many other processes, including planning and reflecting, that go into teaching. Students will then be able to observe in their teachers and administrators adult models of critical thinkers and collaborative decision makers.

For the building principal particularly, there is the need to divide the often competing roles of instructional leader and manager to make both more possible.

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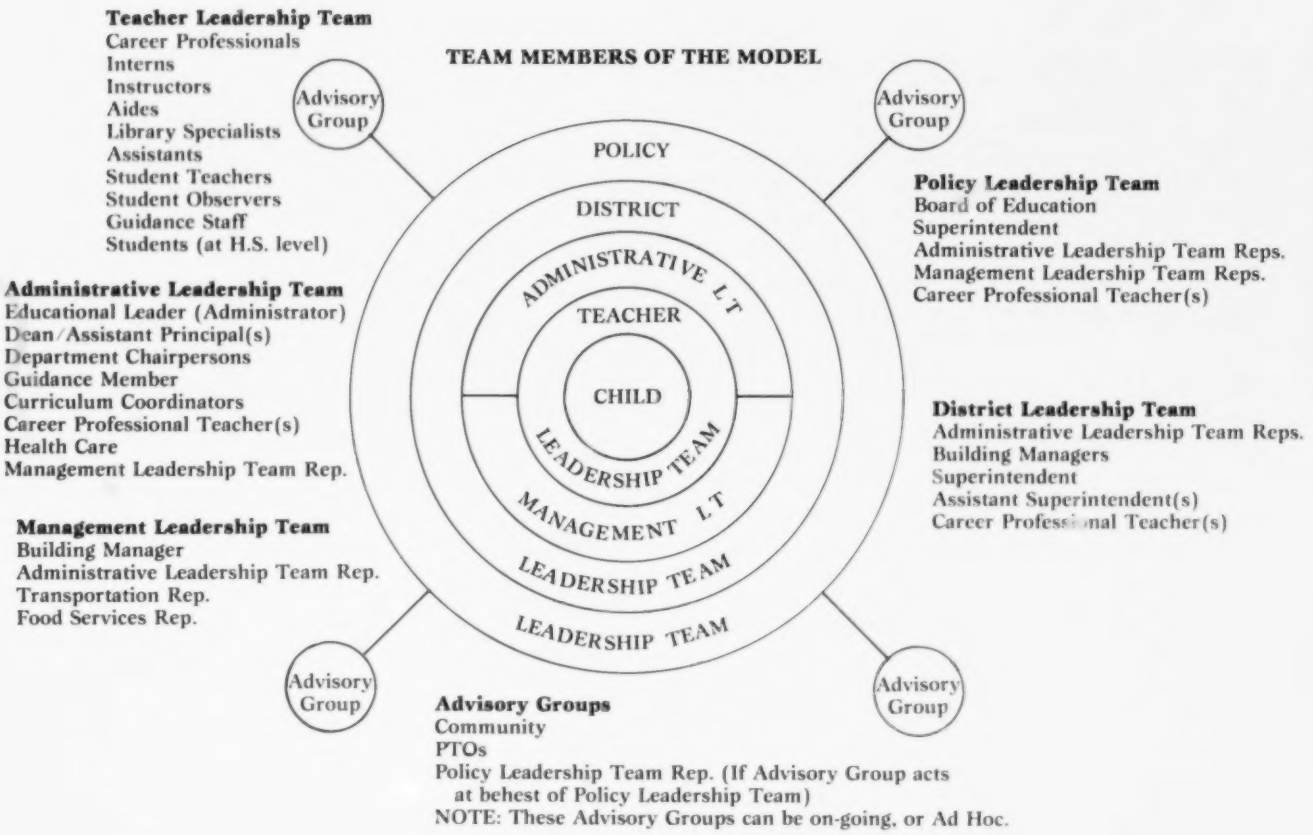
Any new leadership model must be adaptable to all types and sizes of school districts so that, despite the many differences, it will bring about the best educational environment possible.

Teamwork means sharing decision making and accountability.

The Model

A concentric leadership team organizational structure in schools will lead to significant changes in the responsibilities of the team players. The model's first "ring," the student, occupies the center of this organizational scheme; all other leadership teams are meant to support and enhance the student's instructional program.

Relationships in the present school system will change markedly. The direction of authority within the model might be thought of as akin to the movement caused by dropping a stone into a still pond. The resulting rings first move outward in increasingly large circles, but then begin to pulsate back inwardly. So it should be with this model: the rings are interactive, with movement coming from the inner rings to the outer ones, and back again.



As can be seen, those traditionally "in charge" of the decision making process will have to relinquish some of their present prerogatives. Teamwork means sharing decision making and accountability. It widens ownership and, if it works, produces satisfaction for its participants.

Decisions within each ring are made by individuals within the team, various groups within the team or by the entire team. Each ring is responsible for choosing its representative to the next wider ring, and each team is responsible for evaluating its own progress.

A View from the Inside:

Fear, suspicion, distrust, hostility—the presence of any of these will doom the process. Rather, a spirit of trust, cooperation and mutual support is absolutely essential.

The Teacher Leadership Team

This team is composed of members of the differentiated staff including career professionals, interns, instructors, aides, library specialists, assistants, student teachers and observers, guidance staff, and student participants, at least at the high school level. Functioning at the classroom level, the Teacher Leadership Team is responsible for student care and support, instruction, selecting and advising delegates to the Administrative and Management Leadership Teams, materials and equipment selection, staff training, mentoring, supervising student teachers, curriculum development and evaluation, peer review and other general classroom level concerns. The Teacher Leadership Team also designates representatives to the District Leadership and Policy Leadership Teams to provide continuity throughout the system.

The Administrative Leadership Team

A building level group, this Team consists of the educational leader or administrator, deans, assistant principals, department chairpersons, guidance members, curriculum coordinators, career professional teachers, a health care services representative(s), as well as a representative from the Management Leadership Team. The size of the group will vary with the size of the building and the configuration of positions in various districts. The Team is responsible for the selection, evaluation, discipline, reward, and dismissal of the administrator and the instructional staff. Additional responsibilities include student discipline, curriculum development and evaluation, scheduling, budgeting, ordering of instructional materials/services, staff assignments, public relations for the building and its team, staff development, and other general building level concerns.

The Management Leadership Team

Composed of the building manager and representatives from the Administrative Leadership Team, transportation and food services, this team's size will also vary from district to district. It is responsible for the selection, evaluation, discipline, reward or dismissal of the manager and noninstructional staff. Additional responsibilities include budgeting, purchasing noninstructional materials and services, facilities planning, transportation and food services coordination, selection of representatives to the next rings, and other general building level concerns.

The District Leadership Team

Composition of this team includes Administrative Leadership Team representatives, building managers, the superintendent and assistant superintendent(s), and career professional teacher representatives. The Team is responsible for building coordination including facilities, maintenance, operations, transportation, and food services. Additional responsibilities include program development and evaluation, budgeting, needs assessment and research coordination, central office staff selection, evaluation, discipline, reward, or dismissal. The Team also facilitates coordination of public relations, programs for students with special needs, staff development at the district level, legal matters, grants, and general out-of-district contacts.

The Policy Leadership Team

This Team is composed of the board of education, the superintendent and representatives of the Administrative and the Management Teams as well as representatives from the career professional staff. It is responsible for setting goals, salaries, and fringe benefits; establishing a philosophy concerning program and staff structure, and tax rates. Additional responsibilities include the selection, evaluation, discipline, reward, or dismissal of the superintendent. This Team also assumes certain responsibilities for public relations such as the communication of philosophy and goals to the community. Certain tasks, of course, remain the province of the board of education by law and custom.

Advisory groups are acknowledged within the model insofar as they are important in providing an avenue for community groups, leaders, and special interests to communicate their suggestions to the Policy Leadership Team. These advisory groups may be formed by the Policy Leadership Team to help make decisions on issues of community importance either as standing or as ad hoc committees. Additionally, legitimate advisory groups may be formed within the community, and the Policy Leadership Team recognizes its responsibility to provide all such legitimate groups an avenue of access to the district.

There is no avoiding the fact that shared responsibility for making decisions will mean a change in the amount of time teachers are expected to serve, but this time must not come from instruction.

A Note About Team Membership

The various job titles and descriptions cited in this model do not necessarily represent different people. It is presumed that some

jobs will be combined or shared between various Team members. Certainly, differing district needs and staffing limitations will dictate delegation of responsibility. Also, it should be noted that the "Team" represents a general area of responsibility in the total educational process and that, within this rather diverse group, there will be subdivision of the ring such as, in the Teacher Leadership Team, departments, grade levels, or other sub-teams with long or short term concerns.

Making it Happen

Can such a model work? Can it be implemented and, if so, will it bring about the kind of participative professional environment needed? What are possible roadblocks and pitfalls that must first be dealt with?

Meetings to "discuss" must be differentiated from meetings to "decide."

First, as "new" as a model such as this may seem, it is really not such a radical departure or visionary dream, but only an extension of structures already in place in many school districts. This is not to imply, however, that implementing such a plan will be easy or guaranteed. Much of its success will depend upon the attitude with which it is approached. Fear, suspicion, distrust, hostility—the presence of any of these will doom the process. Rather, a spirit of trust, cooperation and mutual support is absolutely essential. All participants must believe that their part in the decision making process will be valued equally with that of others.

Another critical concern is that the quality of instruction not be diminished by teacher involvement in other matters. There is no avoiding the fact that shared responsibility for making decisions will mean a change in the amount of time teachers are expected to serve, but this time must not come from instruction. The nature and definition of a "normal school day" will have to be altered to accommodate new management related tasks. Nor should it be thought that all teachers must assume managerial responsibilities. While teachers are expected to be on grade level or departmental teams, building and district level responsibilities will be undertaken only voluntarily.

Also, because time will be even more precious, the use of meeting time will have to be much more efficient than is now common. Meetings to "discuss" must be differentiated from meetings to "decide." How effectively and efficiently time is spent is probably as important as anything else in this model.

Finally, it should be remembered that the child has been placed at the center of this model. The purpose of education is the develop-

ment of an interested and enlightened citizenry. Regardless of any changes engendered in the name of "educational reform," the success or failure must ultimately be judged by the benefit it brings for students.

Working with What We Have

One real way of insuring that the predicted shortage of quality candidates in teaching will not take place is to address the reasons why talented college students are choosing other professions. Although relatively low salaries are certainly one consideration, working conditions are an equally important factor. Education is a profession now perceived as one in which the participants are not in control of their working conditions, a situation that capable college graduates are unwilling to accept. This model corrects this perception by boldly addressing the question of autonomy.

As the Carnegie Report notes, "Properly staffed schools can succeed only if they operate on the principle that the essential resource is already inside the school: determined, intelligent, and capable teachers." ■

Education is a profession now perceived as one in which the participants are not in control of their working conditions, a situation that capable college graduates are unwilling to accept.

A View from the Inside:

It is generally agreed that professionals do have certain characteristics in common: the ability to control one's destiny, to employ one's individual judgment, and accept accountability for one's actions. Traditionally, teaching, while being a profession in name, has not been considered a true profession by many, including teachers themselves. Certainly many of the conditions under which teachers operate raise questions about the degree of professionalism they enjoy.

The public often perceives teachers as 180-day-a-year employees who enjoy summers and vacations "off." Teachers' unions, based on an industrial model that appears to be more concerned with starting and ending times than with truly professional issues, have also often contributed to the perception. Unions claim they have been pushed into this factory approach by administrators and boards that have, for many years, been unwilling to accept teachers as participants in the decision making process in schools. It is obvious that both unions and school district management must change if public and self perceptions are to change.

Teaching in the Post-Industrial Age

The changes that need to occur will center around both the ways contracts are negotiated and what is included in them; however, probably the greatest changes must come in the day-to-day management and operation of schools. While recognizing that condition of employment issues such as salary and grievance procedures will continue to be part of the process, other ways for unions, administrators and boards to work together on subjects such as staff development and other professional topics need to be addressed. Schools must move away from the factory model to one that encourages participatory management by those involved. Teachers' unions can become more involved in issues dealing with teaching as a profession, for instance, by developing inservice programs, by heightening legislative awareness to the needs of the profession, and by policing their own members to insure that teachers are all highly qualified and capable and remain so throughout their tenure.

Certainly many of the conditions under which teachers operate raise questions about the degree of professionalism they enjoy.

Teachers also need to be more directly involved in the decision making process, particularly in those areas that directly affect how they function in the classroom, such as curriculum, instructional activities, student concerns, and staff development activities. But it is essential that this involvement take place within a context of mutual trust that gives meaningful expression to the decision making process. This can be achieved by providing teachers with real

opportunities to participate in activities designed to enhance the educational program. Committees of teachers with clearly established goals and objectives which identify advisory and decision making responsibilities in the overall mission are essential.

Accountability must then follow. Teachers have long recognized the need for accountability but have been understandably cautious about embracing it when they did not have control over how they function in schools. When this is achieved, teachers will welcome accountability.

Committees of teachers with clearly established goals and objectives which identify advisory and decision making responsibilities in the overall mission are essential.

New Roles for Administrators

This approach will also require that school administrators at all levels examine the ways in which they function. They must move away from what is often a totally autocratic style, sometimes accompanied by *pro forma* committees, to one in which they serve more as coordinators and facilitators. All agree that administrators are necessary and desirable. Research reveals, however, that a change in leadership style is necessary to enhance their performance and effectiveness.

Within school buildings an atmosphere must exist that allows for and encourages shared decision making about those issues which affect both the process and the product of education. School district staff, also, must play a role in "opening up" education to the community and parents by encouraging partnerships and other methods of working together.

The Egg Crate Syndrome

Isolationism is yet another inhibitor of the professionalizing of teaching. Most teachers spend most of their time in their own classrooms either working directly with students, planning activities, or other similar tasks. Little opportunity is provided for teachers to work together, to confer, or to participate in mutually beneficial activities. Opportunities must be provided that diminish the feeling of isolation. Grade level meetings, peer coaching teams, conference and visitation days both in house and outside the district, attendance at local, regional, state, and even national conferences are some ways to assist teachers in achieving the collegiality necessary to the professional.

But teachers are not isolated only from each other. They are also walled off from the community of which they should be a very vital part. Greater communication with the business community, includ-

School district staff, also, must play a role in "opening up" education to the community and parents by encouraging partnerships and other methods of working together.

Opportunities must be provided that diminish the feeling of isolation.

ing curriculum development activities and speaking to groups about schools and their programs, must also be encouraged. Schools are very much a part of the community in which they are located and, as such, must be both responsive to community needs and looked to for leadership in directing what schooling should occur.

The Constant Need for Improvement

Teachers, like all true professionals, must be provided with opportunities, not only to maintain skills, but to grow and develop those necessary to a constantly changing career. As more is learned from educational research about what works and what doesn't work in the classroom, and as state mandates and curriculum requirements mount, teachers need increasing opportunities to learn if they are to maintain, much less improve, their effectiveness. And teachers should have a primary role in directing these efforts.

But self improvement alone does not make a professional. True professionals have influence and control over the environment in which they work and opportunities to grow within that environment. Career paths must be established to provide educators opportunities to pursue a variety of activities designed to enhance the profession.

Those students entering teaching should begin the growth process by serving a paid internship under the direction of a mentor teacher. Both should be provided ample time to work together in order to insure that the intern experiences a full range of opportunities. A mentor teacher would be an individual with experience in the profession assigned to work with interns as they begin their careers. Experienced educators desiring to serve in this capacity should have not only the opportunity but also the time to do so. They should be relieved of some classroom responsibilities while mentoring but should resume them upon completion of the mentoring process. Thus, the position is not a rung on a separate career ladder but one that values the expert teacher in both the teaching and mentoring roles.

Those students entering teaching should begin the growth process by serving a paid internship under the direction of a mentor teacher.

Another path which educators may choose is that of teacher trainer. These people work with teacher training institutions in preparing teachers. Among their activities are curriculum development, supervision of instruction using a clinical model, and other activities necessary to facilitate the teaching/learning process. Like mentor teachers, trainers would move back and forth between their classroom and training responsibilities.

The Paraprofessional

Another important characteristic of professionals is that they are freed from nonprofessional activities, thus making time available not only to concentrate on the professional act itself, whether filling a tooth or trying a case, but also for the preparation and renewal necessary to maintain growth in the profession. Teachers must be able to call upon paraprofessionals so that they are able to plan, to meet, to share, and to study, both collectively and individually. Support staff should be provided to free teachers from clerical duties, monitoring functions, and other non-teaching activities so that they may engage in more teacher/learner interactions, development activities, parent conferences, etc.

Becoming Professional

Literally for centuries, teachers have been thought of—and have thought of themselves—as providers of a service at best, "dishing out" instruction to their "customers" in classrooms much as a waiter goes from booth to booth. This perception has been fostered by communities and school boards who may think of "English teacher" or "third grade teacher" as a generic unit; administrators who may see these same people as five-fifths of an instructional unit; and by teachers themselves who may think of themselves as having been trained in their youth (for all time) and then doing much the same thing year after year, with only the students and the salary step changing. And this perception has been further strengthened by union/management focus of concern on salary and working conditions rather than on professional issues.

If teaching is ever to be considered a true profession, major changes must occur not just in classrooms, schools, and communities, but in the minds of teachers themselves. Teachers must *behave* as professionals, both in and out of their classrooms, speaking positively and pridefully about teaching, the school, students and community.

Teaching still has a long way to go to achieve the status of a profession; however, there are definite signs that movement has begun in areas such as those noted above. The term, "professional," may soon be an authentic one that teachers can claim with pride. ■

If teaching is ever to be considered a true profession, major changes must occur not just in classrooms, schools, and communities, but in the minds of teachers themselves.

A View from the Inside:

Americans in the near future will face a dramatically changing world economy, a fluctuating societal structure, and significantly different demographics. There is no question that competition in the world of the future will require superior education. If Americans must be better educated, with the ability to think creatively and critically, they must be educated by teachers who are similarly skilled. Somehow, ways must be found to provide quality teachers in sufficient numbers to staff the schools of tomorrow.

The Holmes Group Report notes that, by 1991, the supply of new teachers will meet only 68 percent of the demand. The Carnegie Report adds that, between 1986 and 1992, 1.3 million new teachers will have to be found. While predictions for quantity may be alarming, the outlook for enlisting quality candidates is more so, as studies report teachers scoring below other college graduates on most standardized tests.

Somehow, ways must be found to provide quality teachers in sufficient numbers to staff the schools of tomorrow.

And so the problem becomes a dilemma: not only is there the need to attract more college students into teaching, there is also the need to do so while, at the same time, improving the quality of these candidates. Ways must be found to upgrade teacher education (both pre-professional and professional), widen career choices, and broaden the pool of educators if an adequate supply of capable educators needed for this increasingly more demanding profession is to be ensured.

Preparing Competent Teachers

What is a competent, effective teacher, and how does he or she get that way? Numerous studies and reports, as well as this select seminar, agree. Competent teachers must have

—*Strong subject matter knowledge.* Since teaching is about the development and transmission of knowledge, teaching must be grounded on a strong core of knowledge. Teachers must have total command of the subjects they teach. They must have a broad, general education including a solid foundation in history, government, science, literature, and the arts. The basic competencies in the essential skills of computation, writing, speaking, and clear thinking are, of course, understood as fundamental.

—*Systematic and up-to-date knowledge of teaching.* As many college students will attest, knowledge of subject matter alone does not assure quality instruction. There is an ever-growing body of knowledge of pedagogy, based upon research and practice, from which

today's teachers must draw. To do this, teachers must have knowledge of effective teaching techniques, understanding of child growth and development, and the ability to use the most appropriate techniques at the proper times. These competencies must be developed in a systematic and ongoing way, combining demanding coursework with clinical experience.

—*Reflective clinical experience.* Even those teachers who have a sound knowledge base in their subjects and in methods and techniques of effective teaching are not adequately prepared to instruct students. Knowing and doing are very different, and it is important that prospective teachers have the opportunity to test their knowledge in closely supervised, clinical settings.

Many current teacher education programs fall short in developing the above competencies. Teachers often complain of watered-down academic classes and unproductive methods courses. In order to eliminate these weaknesses, subject matter knowledge, based on the traditional academic disciplines, should be the focus of undergraduate preparation, a liberal arts degree guaranteeing graduates who are both well-educated and capable of learning how to continue learning and sharing their knowledge effectively. Competencies resulting from systematic knowledge of teaching and reflective clinical experience should be gained in a graduate program leading to a master's degree in education.

The Carnegie Report recommends that a national board for professional teaching standards be established to set standards for professional teaching competence and to issue certificates to those who meet them. Whether this suggestion or another is followed, it is clear that necessary teacher competencies must be the foundation for all teacher education programs. Only when teachers are required to meet consistent standards of excellence before they are hired and certified, will it follow that graduate and undergraduate programs will produce candidates who meet these standards.

Although agreement can be reached about the outcomes of teacher education, there is considerable concern that elevated standards may have the unwanted effect of reducing an already shrinking pool of teachers. To prevent this, several alternative "routes" to certification are needed, each resulting in highly qualified teachers and enlarging the pool of potential teacher candidates. Many more talented students must be lured into teaching, and to do this, more than one route must be available. Choices, both before and during professional training, must be increased to draw gifted people into the profession. Additionally, ways must be found to allow scientists, historians, writers, mathematicians, and other professionals to

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enter teaching in mid-career and gain necessary qualifications to remain in teaching if they wish.

Retaining the best in the teaching profession is another problem. The solution lies in creating an environment where a professional is content and able to grow.

The "Routes"

—*Route Number One: Entry with a Graduate Degree.* Candidates taking this route would first complete a liberal arts degree with an academic major but with a broad general background. During this time, some field experience should also be available, such as observation or participation in classrooms, public service in schools, volunteering, internships or cooperative work experiences, all of which would receive elective course work credit.

Upon receiving the baccalaureate, candidates would embark upon a two-part master's degree program involving both training in the systematic knowledge of teaching/learning and a reflective clinical experience. The first would include rigorous course work in such topics as critical thinking and problem solving, child and adolescent behavior, learning styles, effective schools and teaching research, interpersonal skills, decision making, teaching techniques, curriculum development, and the teaching of reading. The training phase would be informed by a closely supervised reflective clinical experience which should include the equivalent of one semester's student teaching. Ideally, this would take place in schools in which selected faculty are closely allied with a teacher training institution. Those educational leaders responsible for supervising and coordinating this experience should be adequately compensated in time, money, prestige, and assistance.

Near the end of this stage, candidates would sit for the National Teachers' Examination (NTE) and prepare to serve an internship, during which time the beginning teacher, paid on a master's degree salary schedule, would be closely supervised by a mentor or lead teacher. Following the internship, teachers could be expected to continue their education to meet renewable certification requirements.

—*Route Number Two: The Instructor.* As in the route above, candidates embarking on this program would first complete a strong undergraduate degree with both thorough knowledge in a subject major and a broad general foundation. However, instead of entering a graduate program, they would begin actual teaching immediately in a five-year program as "instructors," under a non-renewable permit. During the first two years, teachers-in-training would be responsible for only four-fifths of a regular teaching assignment. The first year's salary would be set at 80 percent of the bachelor's salary scale, teachers moving to step one their second year. During

this time, they would be supervised by a mentor teacher whose reduced teaching load would be made up by the reduced salary of the trainee. In years three to five, teachers would manage a full teaching load and receive remuneration at appropriate steps on the bachelor's salary scale.

By the end of the fifth year, teachers should have met all certification requirements if they are to continue. This means completing a master's program, including training in the systematic knowledge of teaching/learning, and passing the NTE. Student teaching requirements would be waived and tenure awarded upon completing certification requirements.

Other routes will undoubtedly be devised; however, the most important considerations are the need to attract the most qualified among college students and to be able to draw upon those in other professional fields who may wish to enter teaching for a brief period or for a lifetime career.

Advancement, in fact, usually requires movement out of teaching into administration.

A Model Professional Environment

Finding the best candidates and giving them the best preparation is, of course, but a beginning. Retaining the best in the teaching profession is another problem. The solution lies in creating an environment where a professional is content and able to grow. Without such an environment, the teaching profession will fail not only to attract but to retain its most talented members.

In a profession, one enters as a beginner and moves upward through the years based on skill, experience, and knowledge. Such has not been the case for teachers, who frequently begin and end their careers in the same or equivalent positions. Advancement, in fact, usually requires movement *out* of teaching into administration.

What is needed is a system based on professional achievement and development that encourages experience as an important factor in the recognition and compensation of teachers and encourages continual improvement.

The professional stages described below are but one view of movement through a career, movement that should be viewed not merely as steps up a ladder (with a teacher forced to move further and further from the classroom) but rather as a branching process, with some teachers choosing to branch into mentoring, others into curriculum development, and others into advanced study to improve (and share) their newly gained knowledge. Teachers may choose all or none of these branches and still maintain ties to the classroom. The various possibilities are an effort to create a profession which distin-

guishes between its experience levels: novice, competent member, and professional leader. Moreover, it provides incentives and rewards for excellent and ambitious teachers to stay in teaching throughout their careers.

Instructors are graduates with a four-year liberal arts degree who obtain a five-year nonrenewable permit to teach in the subject of their undergraduate major. They are closely supervised by a mentor teacher.

Certified Teachers are professionals who hold a master's degree in education, have passed the NTE, and have been certified by their state. Certification should be renewable every five years based on evidence of continued professional competence, knowledge, and growth. Recertification standards must be set (perhaps by a national board) with continuing education programs and opportunities available to assure that teachers can meet expected standards.

Society, the economy, and knowledge all change, and these changes require that teachers continuously refocus goals and relearn teaching techniques.

Master Teachers are to be found at several levels, each receiving increased responsibility and salary. Master Teachers may advance in several ways. One is by becoming an expert in the classroom, expertness demonstrated through a systematic process of peer and supervisory evaluation. Another is by obtaining the equivalent of a certificate of advanced study or doctorate in education. Still a third way would be by sharing in the decision making, planning, mentoring, and curriculum development of the school as a whole.

A teacher who has advanced in only one of the above would be a "Level I Master Teacher" and would receive a salary increase (perhaps 20 percent higher than that of a Certified Teacher). Advancing in two areas would result in an appropriately greater increase, and in all three areas, the maximum increase. In addition, Master Teachers at each level, as well as Certified Teachers, would have the option of working during summer months to develop curriculum, conduct inservice, and do research.

Meeting the Need to Grow

Three needs have been discussed so far: to locate and attract the best candidates, provide them with the best preparation, and create a vital professional environment to keep them. What remains is the need to provide continual opportunities for the professional to keep up to date and to grow within the profession.

The need for high quality, continuing education of teachers must be obvious. Society, the economy, and knowledge all change, and these changes require that teachers continuously refocus goals and

relearn teaching techniques. Further, a system which expands opportunities for professional growth must provide the mechanism for developing even higher level professional skills.

A definition of staff development in *Staff Development/Organization Development*, edited by Betty Dillon-Peterson, summarizes a number of necessary assumptions: "Staff development is a process designed to foster personal and professional growth for individuals within a respectful, supportive, positive organizational climate having as its ultimate aim better learning for students and continuous, responsible self-renewal for educators and schools."

In their attempts to develop effective staff development programs, school districts have established guidelines such as those below. Effective staff development programs should

—be designed to meet individual (both personal and professional) and organizational needs.

—reflect what is known about learning and why adults learn.

—allow adults to make their own choices about topics and methods of learning.

—promote collegiality, which leads to mutual evaluation, problem solving, and learning.

—encourage follow-up, feedback, and evaluation of the learning experiences.

—enable the individual school to initiate and implement staff development activity requested by the building staff.

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An Immediate Challenge

If this country is to prosper and grow, if we are to maintain our quality of life and restore our place in the world economy, we must have the highest quality of instruction taking place in our schools. At present, the supply of talented teachers required to provide this instruction is shrinking. There is an urgent need to attract capable high school students into teacher preparation programs, to improve both the quality of these programs and the variety of ways to receive training, and to improve the working environment of teachers so that they can behave and grow as professionals.

Some first steps to meet these needs have been taken, but progress has been very slow. The future of all elements of our society depends greatly upon what happens in American education in the next several years. ■

Afterword

It should be emphasized that *A View From the Inside: A Look at the National Reports* is a snapshot in time of the conversations developed in four separate groups during the meetings in this seminar series.

The report should be viewed as a summary of those four conversations at that time and not as an entity developed by all thirty-six seminar participants. The conversation continues as educators think, discuss, experiment in their efforts to find better ways to educate children.

Several comments from seminar participants who read the final report before publication also suggest that not every participant in the seminar agrees with each conclusion in the four reports. Though all the seminar participants heard reports from each of the four groups on the last day of the seminar, all of the participants did not have the opportunity to shape the final report. This final document is a product of four subsets and not of the seminar as a whole.

Another concern was expressed taking issue with the point of view toward evaluation as expressed in the section "A School for Learning." The concern was expressed in this way, "While I understand the problems associated with rank and class and comparison of school or school districts, I also believe that in order to protect students' interests there must be external evaluation whether it be PET tests, Regents examinations, SATs or some yet to be devised more refined instrument. Not to have such evaluation can result in well intended programs failing to meet the needs of students when they leave the protected school environment and move into competitive situations outside of school."

These two areas of concern are mentioned in this afterword to strengthen the point of view that the report does not represent a unanimous set of beliefs by all the participants in the Select Seminar on Excellence in Education.